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THE MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS TO ENGAGE IN A PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAM

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Introduction: Physical activity is considered an excellent option to achieve an optimum health condition. However, college students are usually linked to a sedentary life style, compromising health and life quality. Previous studies stated that men are usually linked to exercise due to challenge and fitness, while women look for appearance and stress management.

Objective: The aim of this study was to analyse which are the motivational factors that may lead college students to engage in a physical activity program. In addition, it was intended to verify possible differences between genders.

Methods: An online questionnaire was answered by 606 (395 ♀ and 211 ♂) college students.

Results: Overall, students pointed as major factors to engage in a regular physical activity program “health improvement” (84.2%), “body image improvement” (65.0%), “leisure time occupation” (36.1%), and “meet other people” (26.6%). Results were similar between male and female students, except for the higher importance given by the latter in “meet other people” (21.3 vs. 36.5%, $p < 0.001$).

Conclusions: When college students were asked which motivational factors would make them engage in a regular physical activity program, health improvement presented the higher connotation. This result suggests that students are aware of the benefits of physical activity. Appearance took second place, inducing that the aesthetic factor also has great relevance for this population. The only differences between genders were in the factor “meeting other people”, suggesting that female students give more meaning to the sociological features. These results provide the necessary data to create an effective regular physical activity program.

Descriptors: health; exercise; quality of life.

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CORRELATION BETWEEN FINE AND GROSS MOTOR COORDINATION IN CHILDREN

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Introduction: It is well documented that sedentary life styles compromise appropriate levels of health and life quality. Furthermore, low levels of regular physical activity leads to weaker levels of motor coordination. Within children’s motor coordination literature, focus is mostly put on fine and gross coordination separately. The link between these two could be a good indicator for how balanced motor coordination is developing in a child, given a specific age.

Objective: The present study focused on analysing possible correlations between fine and gross motor coordination.

Methods: From IPL Sports Academy, in Leiria, sixteen children (7 ♀ and 8 ♂, aged 5-10 years) were recruited. Gross and fine motor coordination were assessed using the test battery “Körperkoordinationstest für kinder” (KTK) and Minnesota manual dexterity test (MMD) respectively. It was also used a handgrip dynamometer to assess handgrip strength (HS).

Results: Strong and positive statistically significant correlations were found between age and HS ($r=0,82$, $p=0,000$) ranging from 5,7kg to 20,1 kg. Moderate and negative statistically significant correlations were observed between children’s age and MMD test ($r=-0,71$, $p=0,005$). No statistically significant correlations were found between results from KTK and MMD tests ($p>0,05$). Negative and moderate statistically significant correlations were found between MMD tests and HS tests ($r=-0,51$, $p\leq 0,05$).

Conclusions: Overall gross motor coordination performance cannot be used to determine hands fine motor coordination performance. Nevertheless, children with better results on HS were faster manipulating objects with their hands, which demonstrates an existing and significant link between these two types of coordination for the same limb.

Descriptors: Motor coordination; Fine motor coordination; Gross motor coordination; Motor coordination assessment; Ktk.

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